

# **THE SAMSKRITA RANGA**

**MADRAS**

***PRESENTS***

**IN CONNECTION WITH THE  
INTERNATIONAL SANSKRIT CONFERENCE**

**Ministry of Education, New Delhi**

## **ANARKALI**

**Full length Sanskrit Play by  
Dr. V. RAGHAVAN**

***AT***

**THE MAVLANKAR AUDITORIUM  
on Thursday, 30th March 1972, at 8-30 p. m.**



# **SANSKRIT DRAMAS OF TWENTIETH CENTURY**

BY

**Dr. (Mrs.) USHA SATYVRAT**

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If continuity were to be any criterion of the dynamism or vitality of any literature, Sanskrit literature including Sanskrit drama, would certainly have to be said to be characterised by both. In it Bhasa, Kalidasa, Bhavabhuti, Sudraka, Bhatta Narayana and Rajasekhara of the earlier age jostle with Mm. Haridasa Siddhantavagisa, Dr. J. B. Chaudhuri, Sri M. M. Yajnik and Dr. V. Raghavan of the modern age. To the sceptics of the existence and the value of the modern Sanskrit literature the present work gives the welcome information with regard to one branch of it, i. e. drama. It is really gratifying to know from the present work of the existence of hundreds of plays written in the present century quite a few of which have also been staged which is remarkable indeed. The first in the series of volumes on the subject planned by the author, it deals, in all aspects, with as many as 51 plays written in the 20th century. It is a broad critical survey with analytical evaluation.

From the present work it is clear that the Sanskrit drama of the present century, though an extension of this class of literature of the past, possesses a certain individuality of its own. It does try to reflect the urges and aspirations of the people of this age. We find here plays on the problem of dowry, the Kashmir problem, Community Development Projects and so on. And new forms too : Shadow-plays, radio-plays, operas, ballets. This study, the first of its kind, does unique service to the cause of modern Sanskrit drama.



## THE SAMSKRITA RANGA

The Samskrita Ranga, Madras, is an organization founded for the promotion of Sanskrit dramatic activities. Its activities include the production of Sanskrit plays on the stage, as well as on the radio, research and publication in the field of Sanskrit drama, and lectures and expositions relating to Sanskrit and allied theatre forms in India and South East Asia. Although the Ranga as such was founded in 16th November, 1958 on the occasion of the First All India Kalidasa Festival at Ujjain, it is really a continuation of the work that had been already going on in Madras in the presentation of Sanskrit plays.

The first production of the Ranga was the *Malavikagnimitra* of Kalidasa which was performed by its Members on 26th November, 1958 at the First All-India Kalidas Festival at Ujjain where the Ranga had also in subsequent years produced the two other plays of Kalidasa. Its production of *Abhijnana Sakuntalam* at Ujjain was acclaimed the best for the year and it got also the Trophy for the best production at the Fourth All-India Kalidasa Festival. The Ranga had taken its *Malavikagnimitra* to Delhi also, for the Summer Drama Festival where, before the then Vice-President Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the play was produced along with another short play called *Punarumesha*, written by the President of the Ranga.

In Madras, the *Malavikagnimitra* was repeated more than once. All the three plays of Kalidasa which had received enthusiastic reception at Ujjain, Bhopal and Delhi had been repeated in the Annual Conferences and Festivals of the Music Academy, Madras.

In fulfilment of its object, the Samskrita Ranga then undertook to bring to the stage such Sanskrit plays as had never been previously produced but had been only read as literature. A major achievement of the Samskrita Ranga is the presentation on the stage of the *Malati Madhava* of Bhavabhuti. With the assistance of the Central Sanskrit Board it was played in Madras at the Museum Theatre under the Presidentship of the first President of the Central



Sanskrit Board, and in the Music Academy, in the new Auditorium in the presence of the then Governor of Madras. Similarly the **Bhagavadajjukiya**, the best of the Sanskrit farces, was produced by the Ranga for the first time in original Sanskrit in the presence of distinguished scholars including Dr. P. Thieme of Tubingen, West Germany. The play was repeated in the Indo-French Cultural week under the auspices of the Madras University.

Another notable effort of the Samskrita Ranga was the production of the **Agamadambara** of the famous poet and logician of the 10th century in Kashmir, Jayanta Bhatta. The play had not yet been published but had been recovered from manuscript by the President of the Ranga, who has since edited it jointly.

The Ranga had been producing successfully shorter plays and plays on social themes. **Snusha Vijaya** of Sundararaja Kavi of Travancore and **Svasru Vijaya** of V. K. Subrahmanya Sastri of Kumbhakonam are farces in which the daughter-in-law-mother-in-law relation is portrayed. Both these were produced by the Ranga for the first time. The **Vimukti**, a domestic farce but with an inner philosophical meaning, was a play in two Acts written by the President which was produced on the occasion of the Fifth Annual Day with the then Chief Justice of Madras as the Chief Guest.

Another social play produced by the Ranga was **Palandumandana**, a satire of Harijivana Mishra of Jaipur which is also unpublished.

Like the **Malati Madhava**, the **Mudrarakshasa** is also a difficult play rarely produced and the S. Ranga scored a major success when it produced this play, with the Central Sanskrit Board's assistance at the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Kuppuswami Sastri Research Institute on 28-3-1971 before a learned audience of Pandits and scholars from Madras and different parts of India with Prof. K. A. S. Iyer as Chief Guest.

Among the shorter one-Act, plays a good number had been produced by the Ranga on the Radio. On the Stage, they have produced also Bhasa's **Madhyamavyayoga** and **Dutaghatotkaca**. On the A.I.R. they have produced at a stretch the **Malavikagnimitra** and



Act by Act almost all the leading Sanskrit dramas. Several well-known themes and parts of Sanskrit epics, puranas, classics and devotional literature dramatised by the President have also been presented over the A.I.R. e.g., the *Devi-mahatmya*, the *Meghaduta*, and the *Lakṣmīsvayamvara*.

In their work the Ranga had been receiving constant co-operation from the Natya Sangh and some of the shorter productions of the Ranga had been done as part of the Drama Training Course conducted by the Madras Natya Sangh. In most of these productions the President of the Ranga had given before the play, informative lectures on the different types of Sanskrit plays like the farces, the social plays, philosophical plays and so on. For the sake of the Drama Training Course of the Natya Sangh, the Ranga had also prepared Tamil versions of Sanskrit plays which had been produced by the students of that Course.

A noteworthy achievement of the Samskrita Ranga is their bringing out of their customary local background the *Kudiyattam* of Kerala, the only surviving form of Sanskrit Drama in the traditional way. The *Kudiyattam* Troupe was brought to Madras with the assistance of the Central Sanskrit Board and performances of portions of Bhasa's *Abhiseka Nataka*, Kulasekhara's *Dhananjayavijaya* and Harsha's *Nagananda* were arranged for three evenings. The Ranga is also bringing out an edition of the *Natankusa*, a critique of the *Kudiyattam* which is still in manuscript.

An annotated Bibliography of Modern Stageable Sanskrit Plays out has also been brought by the President and one of the Secretaries and published by the Ranga.

The Ranga is also publishing the *Samskrita Ranga Annual* of which five volumes have so far come out. The Annual publishes studies on Sanskrit drama, traditional theatre, S. E. Asian theatre, texts of short plays, translations, bibliography on Sanskrit drama, and reports of Sanskrit drama-activity in India and abroad. A special volume (VIth) is under production now.

The drama activities of the Ranga have been a potent means of imparting Sanskrit knowledge and improving the same for a large number of those who are generally interested in Sanskrit and who



belong to diverse age-groups and walks of life. Indeed some of the actors of the Ranga have learnt Sanskrit and Sanskrit-speaking for the first time. The rehearsals of Sanskrit Plays in which each line and word have been taught and learnt in their full and true significance and had engaged the attention of the Directors and actors for reflection and possibilities of action have contributed to a deeper understanding of the texts of Sanskrit dramas. In fact it is only through these rehearsals, during the efforts to direct and act the dramas that even the works of Kalidasa have come to be properly understood with all their dramatic possibilities. It is only by taking them up for actual production that one understands that the great playwrights of Sanskrit theatre wrote their works for actual production and not for mere reading.

The resources of the Samskrita Ranga have always been extremely meagre. For all its Kalidasa-productions and few others they had received some assistance from Ujjain and Delhi. They have so far been able to achieve something through the enthusiasm and co-operation which it has been the good fortune of the Ranga to enjoy from its own circle of Members and supporters. They have also to express their gratitude to the Central Sanskrit Board for the assistance of the Board for the productions and publications.



**PRODUCTIONS OF THE SAMSKRITA RANGA, MADRAS.**

<b>I. Malavikagnimtra of Kalidasa</b>	(i) Kalidasa Festival, Ujjain	26-11-58
	(ii) At Bhopal	27-11-58
	(iii) 33rd Conference of Music Academy, Madras	Dec. 1959
	(iv) Under the auspices of the College Dramatic activities co-ordinating Council of the Madras Natya Sangh at the Congress Grounds, Teynampet, Madras	8-3-60
	(v) In the Summer Drama Festival under the auspices of Song and Drama Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Talkatora Gardens, New Delhi	10-5-60
	(vi) All-India Fine Arts and Crafts Society, N. Delhi.	11-5-60
<b>II. Snushavijaya of Sundararajakavi (1841-1904 A.D.)</b>	Ist Anniversary of the Ranga held at Y.M.I.A., Mylapore	29-11-59
<b>III. Vikramorvasiya of Kalidasa</b>	(i) Kalidasa Festival, Ujjain	3-11-60
	(ii) 34th Conference of Music Academy, Madras	4-1-61
<b>IV. Bhagavadajjukiya of King Mahendra Vikrama Pallava</b>	(i) Second Annual Day under the joint auspices of Samskrita Ranga and Madras Natya Sangh held at Museum Theatre, Madras	15-12-60
	(ii) Indo-French Cultural Festival of the East-West Week at University Examination Hall, Madras.	17-12-60



V. Natir Puja of Tagore translated into Sanskrit by Dr. V. Raghavan	Under the auspices of Madras State Tagore Cenentary Committee at Museum Theatre, Madras	2-9-61
VI. Abhijnana Sakuntala of Kalidasa	(i) Kalidasa Festival, Ujjain (ii) Polytechnic Hall, Bhopal (iii) 35th Conference of the Music Academy, Madras	22-11-61 23-11-61 5-1-62
VII. Malati Madhava of Bhavabhuti	(i) Museum Theatre (ii) 36th Conference of Music Academy, Madras	29-6-62 5-1-63
VIII. Vimukti by Dr. V. Raghavan	Vth Annual Day of the Ranga at Dharma Prakash, Madras Madras-7	1-12-63
IX. Agamadambara of Jayanta Bhatta	For the Drama Training course of the Madras Natya Sangh at Museum Theatre	22-1-64
X. Svasruvijaya of V. K. Subramanya Sastri	Theatre Workshop Programme of Madras Natya Sangh Drama Training Course	17-12-65
XI. Palandumandana of Harijivana Misra of Jaipur (17th Cent.)	do.	12-5-66
XII. Madhyamavyayoga and Dutaghatotkaca of Bhasa	do.	5-12-67
XIII. Anarkali by Dr. V. Raghavan	The Sastipurti of Dr. V. Raghavan, at Museum Theatre.	1-9-68
XIV. do.	Programme of Madras Natya Sangh Drama Training Course of Museum Theatre.	7-1-69
XV. Mudrarakshasa of Visakhadatta	Silver Jubilee of the Kuppuswami Sastri Research Institute.	28-3-71



**SAMSKRITA RANGA PRODUCTIONS ON THE  
A. I. R., MADRAS**

**A. FULL DRAMAS (MAGAZINE PROGRAMME) :**

Malavikagnimitra of Kalidasa  
Avimaraka of Bhasa  
Agamadambara of Jayanta Bhatta  
Vimukti by V. Raghavan

**B. FULL ONE-ACT PLAYS :**

Urubhanga of Bhasa  
Dutavakya of Bhasa  
Karnabhara of Bhasa  
Dutaghatotkaca of Bhasa  
Mattavilasa of Mahendra Vikrama Pallava (Magazine)  
Tripuradaha of Vatsaraja  
Hasyacudamani of Vatsaraja  
Snushavijaya of Sundararaja Kavi (Magazine)  
Valmikipratibha translated from Tagore by Dr. V. Raghavan

**C. NEW PLAYS :**

Poetess Vikatanitamba by Dr. V. Raghavan  
Poetess Vij. yanka do.  
Poetess Avantisundari do.  
Kamasuddhi do.  
Vaidyabandhu translated from Moliere by V. S. Venkata-  
raghavachari  
Prthukamusti by Mrs. Devaki Menon  
Nati-natau by G. Krishnamurthi of Bezwada

**D. SCENES FROM WELL-KNOWN PLAYS :**

Bhasa's Svapnavasavadatta-Acts I and II and Svapna Scene,  
Act V  
Kalidasa's Sakuntala-(all the Acts)  
Kalidasa's Vikramorvasiya-Act IV  
Bhavabhuti's Uttararamacarita-Acts I and VI  
Sudraka's Mrcchakatika-Acts I, III, IV, IX and X



Bhatta Narayana's Venisamhara-Act VI  
 Bhavabhuti's Malati-Madhava-Acts V and VI  
 Sri Harsa's Ratnavali-Madanotsava from Act I  
 Sri Harsa's Nagananda-Comic Prelude to Acts III and V  
 Visakhadatta's Mudrarakshasa-Act III  
 Bhatta Narayana's Venisamhara-Act III  
 Dhiranaga's Kundamala-Act III  
 Kalidasa's Raghuvamsa

#### E. BUILT UP FROM POEMS, PROSE-WORKS, EPICS AND PURANAS :

'Asadhasya Prathama-divase' from the Meghaduta of Kalidasa  
 by V. Raghavan  
 'Aja-Vilapa' from the Raghuvamsa of Kalidasa  
 'Sita's Exile' from the Raghuvamsa of Kalidasa  
 'Parvati-Paramesvarau' from the Kumarasambhava of Kalidasa  
 'Mahasyeta' from the Kadambari of Bana  
 'Laksmi-Svayamvara' from the Bhagavata Purana, etc.  
 Kaisika Ekadasi from Puranas  
 Devi-Mahatmya (Candi) from Purana  
 Pageant of Indian Womanhood (Magazine-From Veda, Purana  
 Mahabharata, Ramayana, etc.)  
 Savitri-Satyavan from the Mahabharata.



## Dr. RAGHAVAN AS A PLAYWRIGHT

DR. (MRS.) USHA SATYA VRAT, DELHI UNIVERSITY

One of the most prolific and gifted writers of the contemporary period, Dr. Raghavan has made contributions to almost all branches of literature. A brilliant scholar, an incisive critic and an original thinker, he is no less a creative writer. His original writings in Sanskrit have won him the title of *Kavi-kokila*. It is the combination in him of the scholar and the poet, *Vidvat-kavi* and an organiser and indefatigable worker for the cause of Sanskrit that marks him out as one of the most remarkable personalities in the field of Sanskrit.

Among the plays Dr. Raghavan has so far written, some nine, the longest, the *Anarkali* is yet to be published. Among his published plays there are three vignettes collectively known as *Prekshanakatrayi*,<sup>1</sup> which deal with the life of the three poetesses Vijayanka, Vikatanitamba and Avantisundari.

In these vignettes "the author imaginatively works out the situation enriching the text with authentic lines, echoes and ideas from the writings of these ladies and other related writers. He also very eminently succeeds in capturing the spirit and atmosphere of the old Sanskrit literary circles, the *gosthis*, in which *kavis* and *sahridayas* mingled and mutually cherished their twin arts of creation and criticism". These have been produced on the stage and the radio. In his play, the *Rasakila*,<sup>2</sup> which was broadcast from the Madras Station of the All India Radio in December, 1943, Dr. Raghavan selects a few verses from the *Bhagavata* and weaves an interesting plot with the help of his own prose found in short and sweet dialogues. 'He supplies the minimum of additional

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1. Published with Foreword by Mm. Dr. P. V. Kane, 1956.

2. Published, *Amrtavani*, Bangalore, 1945; *Sanskrita Ranga Annual* 1963.



matter required for explaining and introducing the *Bhagavata slokas* and sustaining the narrative. He adds some *slokas* of his own too. Indication is also given of the *Ragas* in which these *slokas*, the ones from the *Bhagavata* and the others by the author, are to be sung. In a number of instances the names of the *Ragas* are deftly shown in the *slokas* themselves. The work forcibly reminds us of the *Utsava-sampradaya* of the *Bhagavata School*.

"The prose recitation in the fourth scene beginning with 'aham tasam virhitanam' has an excellent rhythm. The wonderful metre of the lilting dancing *slokas* in the *Bhagavata* beginning with 'jayati te 'dhikam janmana vrajah' is successfully imitated in two *slokas* of the author himself which bring out the spiritual significance of the *Rasa Krida* or mystic dance where the *Jiva* or soul is in blissful communion with his divine spouse."<sup>4</sup>

Another of the author's plays based on the *Bhagavata* is the *Lakshmisvayamvara* which was published in the *Sanskrita Ranga Annual*, Madras, 1959. It has for its theme the story of the *Samudramathana* as found in the *Bhagavata*. It was broadcast from the Madras Station of the All India Radio in August, 1959 on the occasion of the *Varalakshmivrata*. Here too a plot has been woven on the verses of the *Bhagavata-purana* which are put into the mouth of the reciter called here *Pauranika*.

Dr. Raghavan's *Kamasuddhi*<sup>5</sup> was broadcast from the Madras Station of the All India Radio on a Kalidasa Day. As its very title shows "it deals with the purification of the

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3. See Prof. M. R. Rajagopala Iyengar's Review in the *Bharata Dharma* reproduced in the second edition of the play.

4. See Prof. M. R. R. Iyengar's Review.

5. Published, *Amrtavani*, Bangalore, 1946; *Sanskrita Ranga Annual*, 1963.



connubial love". The author has based his play on the *Kumarasambhava* of Kalidasa of which this is an interpretation. The hero and heroine here are Kama and Rati. Rati is shown to be angry with Kama on account of his wicked deeds. She takes to penance which in severity excels even that of Lord Sankara and which consequently attracts His attention. He appears before her and tells her that He would so arrange things that her husband would try his strength at Him and would be reduced to ashes by the spark flashing forth His third eye. With all his impurity gone he would rise from the ashes. From that time onwards he would be a husband worthy of her (Rati) and an attendant worthy of Him. Rati insists on keeping up the penance. The Lord agrees. He blesses Rati and with this the play comes to an end. The play has quite a few characters which are allegorical ones, for example, love, passion, spring, virtue and wealth. Though abstractions they never appear to be so on account of the interest sustained throughout the work. The prose of the author as usual is very lively throughout.

Another of Dr. Raghavan's plays having allegorical characters is the farce *Vimukti*<sup>7</sup> which was published in the *Sanskrita Pratibha*, New Delhi, 1964. It was very successfully staged in Madras on December 1, 1963. The philosophical conceptions like soul, mind, senses, nature, the three *gunas* (*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*) etc. are personified here. The *Brahmana* in the play represents the soul, his six sons, *Latakesvara*, *Jyeshtha*, *Calaprotha*, *Sundala*, *Dirghasrvas*, *Ulukaksha*, and *Kandula* are mind and five senses respectively. The *Brahmana*'s wife *Trivarnini* is Matter, her mother *Mayavati* is illusion. Her three sisters *Candrika*, *Sonita*, and *Hastini* are the three *gunas* (*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*). The old man is God and *Damshtin* is *Dharma* or *Yama*, the

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6. Since issued in book-form with a Foreward by Prof. Umashankar Joshi, Vice-Chancellor, Gujarat University Ahmedabad.



God of Death. "In this play, in and through incidents of common happening in a miserable house-hold, with a pathetic husband, domineering wife, unruly sons, un-wanted sisters-in-law and sinister mother-in-law is presented the idea of soul overpowered by *Maya*, caught up in Matter and harassed by mind and senses, yearning for and working out its liberation or *vimukti*."

Dr. Raghavan's full-length play in ten acts, the *Anarkali*, like the two shorter plays-the *Vimukti* and the *Prataparudra-vijaya* or *Vidyanatha-vidambana*' were written by him in 1931-2. The *Anarkali* as it was finally produced in 1968 at the time of his 61st Birthday had undergone some changes. The production at the Museum Theatre, Madras, had the Hon. Sri Sher Singh, Minister of Education at that time, as President, and was aided by the Central Sanskrit Board. It was repeated in January 1969 with Dr. C. D. Deshmukh as the Distinguished Guest, at the same Theatre, under the sponsorship of the Madras Natya Sangh. The play is to be published shortly with the assistance of the Central Sanskrit Board.

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7. *Sanskrita Pratibha* VII-ii. 1968; also separately in book-form.



## DR. RAGHAVAN'S CONTRIBUTION TO DRAMA

Dr. S. S. JANAKI

Noteworthy contribution has been made by Dr. V. Raghavan to the Theatre movement in the last three decades. He has written nearly a hundred articles, in English and Tamil, expository and critical, on the theory and practice of Sanskrit drama.<sup>1</sup> As a member of the Central Sangeet Natak Akademi, he had been associated with the work of the National School of Drama; he was a prominent participant in the Drama Seminar organised by the Sangeet Natak Akademi; he has also been connected with the Bharatiya Natya Sangh, New Delhi; and as President of the Madras Natya Sangh, he has placed its work on a permanent and well-organised basis. When on tour abroad, Dr. V. Raghavan took the opportunity to visit drama institutions and meet leading people in the Theatre world. In his talks, papers and discussions, he has been continuously impressing upon modern actors, writers and producers, as well as students of comparative drama, the aesthetic value of the technique of ancient Indian drama, which he himself has expounded in a number of illuminating papers.

He has brought to light some rare Sanskrit dramas lying in oblivion and in manuscripts. Some he has critically edited, for example, Sundararaja kavi's Snushavijaya<sup>2</sup>, a modern Prahāsana, and Bhatta Jayanta's Agamadambara<sup>3</sup>, the precursor of philosophical and allegorical plays in Sanskrit. Of some others he has given critical accounts, for example the Prahāsanas Sahrdayananda<sup>4</sup>, Kuhana-bhaikshava<sup>5</sup> and Somavalliyogananda<sup>6</sup>.

His exhaustive and detailed study of a large number of Sanskrit works in poetics and dramaturgy, both in manuscripts and in print

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1. See the Bibliography of his contributions to Drama, Dance & Music published on the occasion of the conferment on him of the Fellowship of the Sangeet Natak Akademi, Delhi, 1964.

2. Annals of Oriental Research, University of Madras, Vol. VII, 1942-43.

3. To be published shortly.

4, 5, 6. Samskrita Ranga Annual V.



has enabled him to reconstruct the plots of a dozen lost plays on the Ramayana-theme<sup>7</sup> and three Prakaranas<sup>8</sup> or social plays.

Dr. (Mrs.) Usha Satya Vrat, in her article elsewhere in this Souvenir, has spoken about nine plays of Dr. Raghavan. For use on the All India Radio, and on other special occasions he has written also short dramatic pieces, some of which are elegant adaptations and creations based on celebrated classics, for example, 'Ashadhasya prathamadivase' and 'Mahasveta', built with ideas and expressions from the Meghaduta and the Kadambari. The 'Punarunmesha' written and produced for the Song and Drama Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi, 1960, is a playlet, depicting various aspects of the awakening of public awareness of the cultural treasures of the country, music, sculpture, dance, iconography etc. All the above three are published in the Samskrita Ranga Annual II.

Also through translations, Dr. V. Raghavan has contributed to dramatic literature. His Sanskrit renderings of Rabindranath Tagore's Valmikipratibha<sup>9</sup> and Natipuja<sup>10</sup>, have elicited admiration from Sanskrit scholars of Bengal like Dr. S. K. Chatterji and Sri Srijiya Nyayatirtha as revealing 'accuracy of idea, appreciation of the spirit of Bengali language, simplicity and melody.' He has brought to the Tamil-knowing audience renderings in that language of Mahendra Vikrama's Bhagavadajjukiya<sup>11</sup>, and Bhasa's Dutavakya<sup>12</sup>, Madhyamavyayoga<sup>13</sup>, and Dutaghatotkaca<sup>14</sup>.

7. Some old Lost Rama-Plays, Annamalai University, 1962.

8. The Social Play in Sanskrit, Indian Institute of World Culture, Bangalore, 1952 (1st edn.), 1962 (2nd edn.); Bhoja's Srngara Prakasa, 1968. Pp. 858 882.

9 & 10. Samskrita Ravindram (Special No. of Samskrita Pratibha, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi 1966); also separately.

11 & 12. Madras Natya Sangh, 1966 and also in Samskrita Ranga Annual V, 1967. The Tamil version of the Bhagavadajjukiya was enacted on February 6, 1966 at Hyderabad in the festival of plays at the annual convention of the Bharatiya Natya Sangh.

13. To be published; enacted by the Students of the Madras Natya Sangh Drama Training Course on 29th December, 1965.

14. To be published; enacted by the Madras Natya Sangh Drama Training course Students on 23rd August, 1968 in honour of the Shashtyabdapurti Celebration of Dr. V. Raghavan.



Attention may be drawn also to what may not be so well-known, the Tamil plays of Dr. Raghavan. More than a dozen of these have been produced, chiefly on the A.I.R. and published in different Tamil periodicals.

A List of these Tamil plays may be given here :

	Journal	Theme	Production
1. Kamadahana	Silpasri Madras Vol. 1, 1939	With symbolic characters ; based on the inner meaning of Kalidasa's Kumarasambhava adopting the form of popular Kaman-ti (Kamadahana) festival, in which, two parties sing, one claiming Kama as burnt and another as not burnt.	A.I.R., Madras 5th March, 1939.
2. Raga-k-ka- (ko) lai	-do-	On the true nature of the Ragas of Indian music and the legend of how Narada maimed the celestial beauties representing Ragas by his erroneous renderings.	A. I. R. 29th May, 1939.
3. Bharya- vijayam	-do-	On a resourceful wife's stratagem to stop her husband from his addiction to ceaseless card-playing.	A.I.R., Madras 22nd April 1940.
4. Vadyesvari- Vinai	-do- Vol. III 1940	A historical pageant on the origin and different types of Vina and the mythical and historical associations of the instrument; in 17 episodes, from the Vedic period to modern times	A.I.R., Madras 22nd April, 1940.



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| 5. Vinayaka-<br>vaibhavam  | -do-                             | With symbolic characters; on the significance and concept of Ganesa, particularly Siddhi Vinayaka   | A.I.R., Madras<br>5th September 1940<br>(Vinayaka-Caturthi).  |
| 6. Soundarya-<br>nartanam  | Kalai-<br>magal<br>May<br>1941.  | On ideas in the Kalika Purana that Beauty is the harmony of parts and ugliness, their maladjustment and that by Sadhana, the disarranged parts could re-adjust themselves into the pattern of beauty, |   |
| 7. Gangaikon-<br>da- Solan | Kalai-<br>magal<br>July,<br>1942 | On the greatness and achievements of the Cola king Rajendra I.  |   |
| 8. Genius Appa             | Cau-<br>vrye,<br>May,<br>1945    | On the excessive attachment of a father who overworked his children, which resulted in his children falling apart and himself becoming a prey to blood pressure.                                      | Enacted by the United Amateur Artists at the Museum Theatre, Madras on 23rd August, 1968 in honour of the Shashty-abdapurti Celebration of Author |
| 9-11. Man<br>(Deer)        | C. S.<br>Iyer                    | Three vignettes from the Ramayana, Mahabharata and Kalidasa's Sakuntala in Vol. Oct. which Deer forms an integral part of the theme.  |   |
| 12. Pul-natakam            | Cau-<br>very,<br>March,<br>1946. | Built on a brief reference in Valmiki's Ramayana to a blade of grass, which is utili-   |   |



sed here as a motif protecting Sita against Ravana's attempts to violate her person.

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|-------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| 13. Martanda-varman     | -do-<br>April,<br>1947.        | On King Martanda-varman (18th Century), the maker of modern Travancore.  |
| 14. Babarum Humapunum   | -do-<br>May,<br>1947.          | On Babar giving up his life for the sake of Humayun.   |
| 15. Padminil            | -do-<br>June,<br>1947.         | On the Rajput Queen Padmini of Chitoor and Sultan Allaudin Khilji.   |
| 16. Caturanana-panditan | -do-<br>Decem-<br>ber<br>1947. | On the life of a Cola General based on an inscription at Tiruvorriyur, edited by Author himself in Ephigraphia Indica (XXVII. 1948). |

Dr. V. Raghavan has been interested in the production of plays from his early days and as a student of the Sanskrit Department of the Presidency College and the Secretary of its Sanskrit Association, he had been responsible for the production of three plays in that Association, the Kundamala of Dhiranaga, the Svapnavasavodatta of Bhasa and the Abajnnanasakuntala of Kalidasa. He had been very intimately associated with some of the distinguished actors of the Suguna Vilasa Sabha who had also been taken leading part in the Sanskrit plays at both the Suguna Vilasa Sabha and the Madras Samskrita Academy, notably Sri S. Raghavacaharya who gave masterly expositions of the character of Sakara in the Mricchakatika and Bhima in the Venishamhara and Sri S. Satyamurthi as Maitreya in the Mricchakatika and Asvatthaman in the Venisamhara. He had also spent a considerable time with one Sri Ramamurti Panthulu who was in the P. W. D. in those days and was a very gifted mono-actor and gave effective readings of Acts from several Sanskrit dramas. As one of those who had been closely associated with him in the Samskrita Ranga which he founded and under which



he has produced a number of plays (whole plays or acts), both on the Stage and on the Radio, I may say that we have had a rare opportunity to know from his directions and rehearsals, Sanskrit drama in its depths and its emotional possibility and acting potentiality. No doubt he has expounded in his papers on Sanskrit Drama the highlights and technique and subtleties of the production according to the Natya Sastra, but it is in directing these plays for us that he has shown us the practical application of these principles. Of course owing to the limitations of funds and other resources it has not been possible for us to set up a large organisation and embark upon the perfection of this method of presentation in a complete form, as envisaged in the classical technique. But we have learnt a good deal of this technique and its aesthetics and while conceding to the prevailing notions and tastes of the drama-seeing public, we have embodied several ideas of this classical idiom. We have learnt also the practical implications of the theory and Rasa, of Sthayin and Sancharins, of how the dialogue of a master like Kalidasa cannot be meddled with, without harming the principles of Rasa and how abridgment of his plays require great knowledge and skill. It had been a pleasure to watch the precision and the neat, proper and attractive gestures of facial or other physical expressions including the poses of the hands which we have watched him show with his mastery of the Natya Sastra, in the course of his direction. It is our earnest hope that the Sanskrit drama, being a high achievement of Indian Art and at the same time an effective means of popularisation of Sanskrit study, in an easy way, the public will come forward to support in generous measure the work of the Samskrita Ranga, one of his creations, and thereby show our appreciation of his manifold services to Sanskrit and the arts.

This article may be ended with the following homage to the President of the Samskrita Ranga:

Kim him na sadhayati kalpalateva vani  
Sri Raghavasya Bharatadvaguror guror nah.



## ANARKALI

The story of *Anarkali* has come down in tradition and there are no historical evidences to determine its exact version. In literary and film versions it has been differently handled as a tragedy or otherwise. Dr. Raghavan has dealt with it here in his own way according to the main idea which he has emphasised in the play, viz. the synthesis and reconciliation of opposing and divergent things. With this aim he has given prominence to the trend of the times seen in the field of religion. Under the lead of emperor Akbar, there was the meeting together of the different faiths and Akbar started a Parliament of religions, the Din-Ilahi. The author removes the contradiction in the character of Akbar who is alleged to sentence Anarkali to death. In allowing Prince Salim to marry the slave girl, an egalitarian reconciliation has been achieved. As in religion and philosophy, the author has brought together the Hindustani and Carnatak schools of music and dance through Pundarika Vitthala, a musician of Akbar's court who hailed from Mysore. By using Sanskrit for a story of the Moghul court, he has brought together two apparently incongruous things. Naturally, a study by the author of a considerable amount of writings on the history, life and social conditions of the Mughal period including manuscripts of Sanskrit writings has gone into the setting of the background and the construction of the story and the plot of the play. It is but appropriate that on the occasion of this historic Sanskrit Conference a contemporary play, a piece of modern creative writing in this ancient language should be produced, demonstrating the vitality, persistence and plasticity of that great language.

## ACT I

*Prelude* : Road leading to Fatepur Sikri. Enter two Muslims, a *Shia* and a *Sunni*, disputing about the mutual superiority and greater authoritativeness of each one's sect ; they are about to come to blows.



Enter *Akbar* and *Birbal* (*Viravara*) in the guise respectively of a Hindu Sannyasin and a Brahman; the former prevents the Shia and Sunni from mutual fight, but these latter two start attacking Akbar taking him for a Brahman. The two Muslims reveal that they had heard of Akbar having started a religious association and that they want to reach there. After Akbar and Birbal depart, the Shia and Sunni discuss between themselves and realise vaguely the real identity of the Sannyasin and Brahman.

*Main Act*: Fatepur Sikri Palace—Ibadat Khana built for the *Din Ilahi*. Enter Akbar, Salim, Abul Fazl, Abul Faizi, Raja Todar Mall, Abdul Rahim Khanakhan, Tansen, Muslims of different sects.

Akbar recollects Babar's message to Humayan on how to rule over a predominantly Hindu country; Akbar's own resolve to be an Indian and an Indian Ruler, and his own gratitude to Hindus and his appreciation of Hindu pantheism. He asks Abul Fazl to do everything that would put Hindus at ease and also prevent fanatical acts and practices of Mullahs and Kazis and takes over final judicial powers from the hands of Mullahs and Kazis.

Appoints the 'nine gems' '*nava-ratnas*' of his Court.

Enter Birbal with Sacchidananda Saraswati, who conveys to Akbar the message of his teacher to ban cow-slaughter and abolish the pilgrim-tax, *jessia*.

Enter Jain Sadhu Bhanuchandra Gani from Gujarat, conveying the same appeal of his teacher Siddhichandra Gani, whom Akbar had formerly met.

Abul Fazl now announces that everything is ready for the inauguration of the *Din Ilahi*. Akbar recapitulates the birth of Salim and the connection that the new palace bears to it and counsels Salim as to how he should shape into a worthy son.



A. Fazl points out the resemblance between Sufism and Advaita Vedanta and Sacchindanandasrama supports it.

Enter the Iranian High Priest Dastoor Mahayarji Rana from Navsari, presents Akbar with the 'Avyanga' of the Parsis and exhorts him to adore the Fire and the Sun.

Enter Padre Rodolpho Aquaviva from Goa, who is over-anxious to convert Akbar to Christianity and finds difficulty only on the question of monogamy. Akbar accepts a copy of the Bible, orders a Persian translation of it and tells Padre his difficulties about the concepts of virgin-birth, the Trinity etc.

Akbar inaugurates the *Din Ilahi*, by giving its members the insignia, form of salutation (*Allah ho Akbar*) etc. He then asks Abul Fazl to announce his (Akbar's) Ten Commandments.

The inaugural session of the *Din Ilahi* ends with two verses from Khanakhan and Akbar and Tansen on the transcendent form of Divinity, its diverse Names and Forms and the ultimate unity of the latter.

## ACT II

*Prelude*: Abdul Khadir Badauni, Abdul Nabi and Mulla Md. Yazdi meet, each ventilating his grievance against Akbar, Akbar's anti-Islam and pro-Hindu whims and fancies, their treatment at his hands and their resolve to set afoot some movements against Akbar, his *Din Ilahi*, his Hindu courtiers and especially Birbal whom they want to get rid of immediately.

*Main Act*: Akbar and Abul Fazl. Akbar relates the circumstances under which he thoughtlessly dismissed Birbal. A. Fazl points out that jokes and humour must be taken superficially and not seriously.



A man blind in one eye is ushered into the Court as a candidate; his wits are tested by the Emperor and others and it turns out that the one-eyed man was none else than Birbal in disguise.

Akbar's literary court; his ordering of translations of Sanskrit works into Persian. Pt. Bihari Krishnadas dedicates to Akbar his Sanskrit-Persian Dictionary to help this translation work. Pt. Mahesa Thakur of Mithila is introduced by Abul Fazl whose *Aini Akbari* the Pandit has been rendering into Sanskrit; Akbar gifts to the Pandit the Kingdom of Darbhanga in Mithila.

Tansen and Man Singh introduce the Karnataka musician and composer Pundarika Vitthala, who wrote the dance work *Nartananirnaya* in honour of Akbar. Akbar asks about the difference between Hindustani and Karnataka schools of music and dance. Akbar speaks about the dancer Anarkali in the harem and asks Pundarika Vitthala to train her in a Karnatic dance-piece for her forthcoming recital in the palace.

### ACT III

Part of the Harem. Enter maids. Nadira (Anarkali) and two others.

They are playing with a pomegranate flower comparing it with Nadira whose beauty they are praising. They look at her palm and find that her fortune line shows that she would marry a prince. They see also a ring on her finger about which *Nadira (Anarkali)* tells them the story of how a fortune-teller had told her mother that a great fortune would dawn upon her (Nadira) but cruel fate would interfere and this ring was given to her as a talisman. The two friends give Nadira their good wishes.

A messenger from the King announces to Nadira that the King desires to see her dance soon and that she might



train herself in a new piece depicting love. The two friends ask Nadira what song she will sing and dance. Suddenly Nadira remembers her pet deer and rushes out in search of it.

#### ACT IV

Garden. Enter Salim. There had been a shower which had made the garden more fresh and enchanting, and Salim somewhat pensive. As he is soliloquising, Nadira (Anarkali) comes there in search of her pet deer. The two meet. Salim enquires and learns who she is—a maid attending upon his own Hindu wife—and she also learns it is Prince Salim that she has met. Anarkali departs saying that her mistress will be angry if she tarries there long. Salim describes her beauty and gives expression to his love as well as the difficult predicament in which she is.

#### ACT V

A part of the Palace. Enter Rahim Khan, a man about the court and a friend of Salim. He is fed up with the austerity of the court and the religious and pro-Hindu ways of Akbar and the lack of opportunity to loot and destroy. As he is throwing up his arms in despair, enter Ismad Begum, mother of Meharunnissa (Nur Jehan to be), who is in the service of Salim's Hindu wife. She is an expert in perfumery and has invented Attar-Jehangir with which she is trying to win Salim's favour; she has also managed to get for her daughter the duty of taking drinks to Salim's chamber in the night. With all this, she hopes to make Salim infatuated with her daughter.

Rahim and Ismad Begum work out their ideas for ridding the court of religious people, Hindn ministers, etc., to work up the Mullas and Kazis for a general revolt against the King and to create a split between Akbar and Salim.

But Suddenly Ismad Begum finds things taking a different course. Anarkali has been commissioned in the place of her own daughter and she enters taking drinks to Salim.



From Anarkali's soliloquy Ismad Begum gathers that already Salim and Anarkali had met and their love had taken root.

Ismad Begum now resolves for a more determined effort to get Anarkali and Akbar out of her way.

### ACT VI

Salim's Palace. Enter Salim soliloquising on his deep love for Anarkali, and the complicated situation in which he and she are. As he is apostrophising her, she enters; together they ponder over the many obstacles in the form of the King, Ismad Begum and others. Salim assures that he will assert himself as the Yuvaraja and see that their love is fulfilled.

### ACT VII

*Prelude* : Part of Salim's Palace. Enter Salim walking up and down, his mind pre-occupied with thoughts of Anarkali. He is followed by Rahim Khan who is trying to tell him about the plan he and Ismad Begum have been evolving for helping him to be free from the domination of the austere King, now that the *Din Ilahi* and the other whims and fancies of Akbar had estranged the Muslim Mullas and Khajis and they are prepared to help in the rising against the King and that in the harem also intrigues could be started and that all that is necessary is funds from Salim. Salim does not follow Rahim's words and wants his help in his love for Anarkali.

*Main Act*. Part of the Harem. Enter Anarkali soliloquising about her being the object of uncommon attention in the harem that morning. She is greatly afraid of the King who might get scent of her love with the Prince.

Enter musician Pundarika Vitthala to check up whether Anarkali is ready and remembers all that he had taught her for the coming dance-recital. Although pre-occupied in mind she assures her teacher that she will acquit herself well and



bring credit to him. Enter her friend with her dance equipment. The two friends converse as the friend puts on her ornaments and decoration. Anarkali confides in her friend and reveals a great anxiety about the dangerous waters into which she might run. The enmity of Ismad Begum is now well-known and if matters become public and the King is also prejudiced, Anar says that that will be her end, The friend asks her about her ring and Anar reveals that that will have to be her saviour if anything untoward happens to her. However, joyous at the thought of Salim being present in the court-hall, Anarkali goes there for the dance-recital.

### ACT VIII

The music and dance Hall in the Palace. Enter Akbar, Salim, Abul Fazl, Birbal, Rajah Mansingh, Tansen, Pundarika Vitthala. Ismad Begum, Rahim Khan, musicians etc.

Akbar speaks enthusiastically to Salim about Anarkali, his affection for her, and her accomplishments, assuming that Salim had not known her. He asks Tansen and Pundarika Vitthala about the new dance to be performed by her, a piece from the Karnatic tradition. Vitthala explains that the dance-song is symbolic and through a flower and a bee, speaks of the yearning of a lady for her lover.

Anarkali dances to this song. In the course of the dance, glances are exchanged between her and Salim. Rahim and Ismad Begum watch this and the latter stealthily approaches Akbar and whispers into his ear the exchange of mutual glances by the Prince and Anarkali. Akbar is upset, he orders the dance to be stopped and to have the dancer taken away and immolated for her offence. Anarkali falls unconscious ; one by one, everybody in the Court, including Salim, retires ; Akbar remains, as also Ismad Begum in a corner. Akbar deplotes the way the Prince had allowed himself to be dragged into the love-affairs with a slave-girl ; recalling his affection for Anarkali and her earlier innocent life, Akbar



wonders how she had changed and turned faithless and ungrateful. As he is wondering whether this love-affair had just then sprouted, Ismad Begum lurking behind approaches Akbar and narrates how it has been going on for some time. The result of this news from Ismad Begum has an unexpected result. Akbar charges her for trying to entice Salim into the net of her daughter Meharunnissa, and orders the latter to be married off to an official and sent along with her mother to Bengal. Akbar ponders over the situation, with an agitated mind, re-affirms that only by putting out the flame of Anar could the fly of the Prince's heart be saved.

### ACT IX

*Prelude :* Part of the Palace. Enter Rahim Khan in a mood of frustration, soliloquising about the miscarriage of his plans, particularly the sending away of Ismad Begum and her daughter to Bengal. However he hopes that although at a distance, with her fertile mind, she will still be working out her plans regarding Salim and her own daughter.

He now hears foot-steps and finds that Salim is coming fast towards the prison where Anarkali is lying.

*Main Act:* Inside the prison-house. Enter Anarkali lying on the ground. She slowly rises up and realises that she is not in the dance-hall but in the dark prison-house. She feels terrible anguish as she slowly recollects the happenings at the dance. She is wondering what has happened to Salim and what the King has said or done further.

Now Salim rushes in and presses Anarkali to come away with him on a horse, so that they might, before day-break, escape to a far off place. She resists the idea of escaping, as they might be attacked by the King's troops and that they may be in more danger. She dissuades Salim from sacrificing himself and his future for a slave girl like herself. Salim protests. But then Salim and Rahim Khan have to retire as the King is found to be coming towards the Prison.



## ACT X.

Salim's Palace. Salim is reclining on a cushion-seat. With him is Rahim Khan. Salim is very much agitated. He goes on asking if it is actually the King who had come to the prison and whether he is still there. Salim wants to go back to the Prison and meet Anarkali. Rahim Khan thinks of a plan to compose the mind of Salim. He gives him a drink with a sleeping powder so that when late in the morning Salim will arise from his stupor, Anarkali would have been already dead, and Salim might gradually reconcile himself to the situation. Declaiming again and again against the King, Salim, under the effect of the sleeping powder slowly falls on his bed.

The soft strains of a stringed instrument and then of a song are now heard. Slowly Salim rises from his stupor; the soothing effect of music reminds him of a similar effect of his seeing Anarkali whose presence also produces a sense of unity in his being. This suddenly reminds him of what might have happened to Anarkali who is under the death-sentence of the King and he shouts.

Suddenly musician Pundarika Vitthala arrives and reveals that Anarkali is safe and alive. The King's Hindu daughter-in-law had, out of her affection for Anarkali, prevailed upon the Emperor to relent and withdraw his sentence.

As they are conversing, the maids of the harem come with Anarkali and hand her over to Salim as a birth-day gift of the Prince's Hindu wife.

Tansen and the Emperor arrive and pronounce the benediction (Bharata-vakya).

The Samskrita Ranga's benedictory verse.



## THE CAST

(IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

Nandi-verses, Music  
and Benedictory verse }

Sutradhara

Sutradhara's Pupil  
(Sishya)

Shiya

Sunni

Akbar

Birbal (Viravara)

Rajapurushas

Abul Fazl

Abul Faizi

Sacchidandasrama

Bhanucandragani

Salim (Jehangir)

Dastur Mahayarji  
Rana

Padre Rudolf, }  
Aquaviva }

Rajah Todarmal

A Jew, Rabbi

Abdur Rahim }  
Khanakhan }

Rajah Man Singh

Smt. Lalita Nagarajan,  
N. Delhi

Dr. V. Raghavan

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Lecturer, Vaishnava College.  
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Christian College, Madras

S. Chellapa, L.I.C., Madras



Tansen, Musician

Abdul Khadir Badauni

Abdun Nabi

Mulla Mohammad Yazdi

Pt. Mahesa Thakkura

Pundarika Vitthala, }  
Karnataka Musician }

Pt. Vihari Krishna Das

Anarkali

Friends of Anarkali,  
Sakhis

Rahim Khan

Ismat Begum, Mother  
of Meharunnissa  
(Nurjehan)

Nattuvangam

Sitar

Veena

Mridangam

B. Vaidyanathan, Indian Medical  
Practitioners' Co-operative Society,  
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